

## UNIQUE IN THE AREA

# Translation Center Opens

By THOMAS DIMOND  
Star Business Writer

Having invested several thousand dollars in an office, calling cards and announcements, a bank account to meet certain future contingencies, telephones, stationery and other supplies such as pens and pencils, and one copy each of the U. S. Government Organization Manual and the Congressional Directory, Larry Hanlon and Manuel Munoz Carrasco went into business three weeks ago as the International Translation Center, Inc.

They occupy a neat, if box-like office, last used as strike headquarters for Associated Press employees, on the seventh floor of 1346 Connecticut Ave. NW, just below Dupont Circle. "It's a wonderful feeling," Carrasco said of running his own business. Hanlon agreed, but added: "I haven't a penny in my pocket."

The two, who plan to add a few translators to their "in-house" staff and line up freelancers for specific projects, believe theirs is the only company of its kind in the area. A number of language schools do translating as a sideline, they said, and there are "brokers" who hire linguists for specific projects after getting a government contract. But they know of no other company engaged exclusively in translating.

### Needs are Stressed

Just about every agency of government, they said, needs translations of publications and technical papers, and industry — especially companies that export — requires translations of technical manuals, pamphlets, and proposals and contracts submitted to foreign governments.

"Translators are like singers or saxophonists," Hanlon, the lanky and wry partner, said the other day. "The great star makes a lot of money while the guy in the honky-tonk makes 50 cents an hour."

A professional translator, working full-time for an international organization, Carrasco in-

terjected, may earn \$25 or \$30 per 1,000 words, or about two hours' work. But most, working for language schools or "brokers," receive \$5 to \$10 an hour.

Hanlon and Carrasco plan to be more generous with — and demanding of — the free-lancers they hire, recognizing the hard work that goes into the job.

"It's a thankless profession," Hanlon said. "No one ever says, 'That's a good translation,' because they don't know the original language." And yet, in addition to the years of experience that qualifies a translator for his work, a good deal of background reading often is necessary for the task, especially if the material is technical.

### Team Approach

They plan to emphasize the "team approach," convinced that no linguist knows all his languages equally well. The translator will review his work with another having a more intimate knowledge of one of the languages to assure accuracy.

The partners expect their firm to handle the bulk of the Latin, Germanic and Slavic assign-

ments that come their way. Hanlon learned French, Italian, German and Spanish while living in Europe for three years, and Carrasco, a native of Spain who speaks English with a noticeable accent, also learned Portuguese and French while studying in Madrid, Paris and London. They are looking for someone competent in the Slavic area.

Meanwhile, Hanlon and Carrasco, who got together while working as translators for a language school, are busy lining up clients and promoting their company. "If I waited 10 years to do all the work I'm doing now," the 27-year-old Hanlon said of starting a business from scratch, "I wouldn't have the energy. I'm looking forward to the 12-hour day."